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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/016,676	12/10/2001	Yuji Igata	M2047-33	2525
7278	7590	04/10/2006	EXAMINER	
DARBY & DARBY P.C. P. O. BOX 5257 NEW YORK, NY 10150-5257			HAMZA, FARUK	
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/016,676	IGATA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Faruk Hamza	2155	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 February 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-12 and 14-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-12 and 14-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Response to RCE

1. This communication is responsive to the RCE filed on February 22, 2006.
Claims 1,10-12 have been amended. Claims 2 and 13 have been canceled.
Claims 1,3-12 and 14-21 are now pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1,3-12 and 14-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koether (U.S. Patent Number 5,875,430) hereinafter referred as Koether and further in view of Wood et al. (U.S. Patent Number 6,816,703) hereinafter referred as Wood.

Koether teaches the invention substantially as claimed including a system for bi-directional communication between appliance network and service provider network for diagnostics, asset history and maintenance (See abstract).

As to claim 1, Koether teaches an appliance information transmitting/receiving method for handling information regarding an appliance

transmitted/received between said appliance and displaying unit of a customer and a server of a provider through a network, comprising:

receiving, at the server, identifier information from said appliance through said network, wherein the identifier information specifies the appliance (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35);

sending, to the displaying unit after said server receives said identifier information, a menu of provider responses through said network (Column 5, lines 50-59, Column 7, lines 46-62);

said server receiving, from said displaying unit through said network, item information selected from said menu displayed on said displaying unit (Column 5, lines 50-59, Column 7, lines 46-62, Column 8, lines 14-30); and

processing, at the server, said selected item information (Column 8, lines 14-30);

wherein the receiving identifier information step further comprises sending the identifier information by a telecommunications unit, connected to said network and disposed in said appliance, in response to a send instruction for said identifier information (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 7, lines 46-62); and

wherein the sending a menu step, sends a menu is structured to have a different content in accordance with said identifier information (Column 5, lines 50-59, Column 7, lines 46-62, Column 8, lines 14-30).

Koether does not explicitly teach the claimed limitation of activation of a button disposed on the appliance to send instruction.

However, Wood teaches the claimed limitation of activation of a button disposed on the appliance to send instruction (Column 10, lines 65-Column 11, lines 23).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Koether by adding activation of a button on the appliance to send instruction, which will ease user's interaction with the appliance. One would be motivated to do so to enhance the system's usability.

As to claim 3, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said send instruction for said identifier information is issued by said appliance specified by said identifier information that is selected from an appliance list which is displayed by said displaying unit (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 7, lines 46-62).

As to claim 4, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said server receives information expressing the state of said appliance specified by said identifier information together with said identifier information from said appliance through said network, and further wherein said identifier information and said information expressing the state of said appliance is information that is sent through said network by said telecommunications unit disposed to said appliance

(Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 8, lines 14-30).

As to claim 5, Koetehr teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the processing step further comprises the step of:

if said item information received from said displaying means is regarding an item to request repair work, when said appliance is to be collected and repaired, sending, from the server, a menu of collecting methods to said displaying unit through said network (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 6, lines 3-15, Column 7, lines 46-62); and

receiving, at the server from said displaying unit, through said network information regarding a collecting method selected by said customer from said menu of collecting methods displayed by said displaying unit (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 7, lines 46-62, Column 8, lines 15-30).

As to claim 6, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the processing step further comprises the steps of:

Receiving, at the server, said identifier information regarding said appliance from a third party terminal through said network when the appliance is to be collected and repaired by delivery to the provider by the third party (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 6, lines 3-15, Column 7, lines 46-62); and

Sending, from the server, to the third party information regarding a delivery destination of said appliance when the server receives the identifier information from the third party (Column 6, lines 3-15, lines 34-41);

Wherein said information regarding said delivery destination of said appliance is in accordance with said identifier information received from said third party terminal (Column 6, lines 3-15, lines 34-41).

As to claim 7, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the receiving identifier information step further includes a sending registration information to the displaying unit when said identifier information received from said appliance is unregistered (Fig. 6, Column 5, lines 20-35, lines 50-59).

As to claim 8, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said menu sent to said displaying unit includes at least one of a telephone response request, a repair request, an operation method description request and an another menu display request (Column 5, lines 50-59, Column 7, lines 45-62).

As to claim 9, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving method as set forth in claim 1, wherein a plurality of said appliances are disposed and connected to a LAN, and said telecommunications

unit of any one of said plurality of appliances is connected to said network (Fig. 1, Column 4, lines 13-35).

As to claim 10, Koether teaches an appliance information transmitting/receiving system for handling information regarding an appliance transmitted/received between said appliance and displaying unit of a customer and a server of a provider through a network, said appliance comprising:

a telecommunications unit which sends identifier information to said server through said network to which said telecommunications means is connected (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Fig.2);

wherein when said telecommunications unit receives a send instruction for said identifier information specifying said appliance, and when said server receives said identifier information, said server structures a menu of provider responses into a different content in accordance with said identifier information and sends said menu to said displaying unit through said network (Column 7, lines 46-62, Column 8, lines 14-30);

wherein when said server receives item information which is selected by said customer from said menu displayed by said displaying unit, said server performs processing corresponding to said item information (Column 7, lines 46-62, Column 8, lines 14-30), and

Koether does not explicitly teach the claimed limitation of activation of a button disposed on the appliance to send instruction.

However, Wood teaches the claimed limitation of activation of a button disposed on the appliance to send instruction (Column 10, lines 65-Column 11, lines 23).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Koether by adding activation of a button on the appliance to send instruction, which will ease user's interaction with the appliance. One would be motivated to do so to enhance the system's usability.

As to claim 11, Koether teaches an appliance information transmitting/receiving system comprising:

an appliance of a customer installed indoors including a telecommunications unit connected to a network (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Fig.2); and

a displaying unit of said customer installed indoors (Fig. 2, Column 7, lines 46-62);

wherein said telecommunications unit sends identifier information to a server of a provider through the network, when said telecommunications unit receives a send instruction for said identifier information specifying said appliance indoors (Column 7, lines 46-62, Column 8, lines 14-30);

wherein said displaying unit displays a menu of provider responses, received from the server through the network, wherein the menu of provider

responses is in accordance with said identifier information, and displays information corresponding to item information selected by said customer from said menu which is displayed, and wherein said menu received by said displaying unit is structured to have a different content in accordance with said identifier information (Column 2, lines 9-22, Column 7, lines 46-62, Column 8, lines 14-30), and

Koether does not explicitly teach the claimed limitation of activation of a button disposed on the appliance to send instruction.

However, Wood teaches the claimed limitation of activation of a button disposed on the appliance to send instruction (Column 10, lines 65-Column 11, lines 23).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Koether by adding activation of a button on the appliance to send instruction, which will ease user's interaction with the appliance. One would be motivated to do so to enhance the system's usability.

As to claim 12, Koether teaches an appliance information transmitting/receiving system, comprising:

A displaying unit and a telecommunication unit disposed within an appliance of a customer, wherein the displaying unit and the telecommunication unit are connected to a network (Column 7, lines 46-62, Column 8, lines 57-64);

a server of a provider for handling information regarding the appliance through the network (Column 8, lines 14-30); and

a customer information database which manages customer information (Column 2, lines 60-Column 3, lines 4);

wherein said server receives identifier information specifying said appliance from said appliance through said network, and sends a menu of provider responses to the displaying unit and said server receives from said displaying unit item information selected by said customer from said menu which is displayed by said displaying unit (Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 7, lines 46-62);

wherein, when said server receives said item information selected by said customer, said server performs processing corresponding to said item information, and said identifier information is information which is sent from the telecommunications unit in accordance with a send instruction for said identifier information (Column 8, lines 14-30);

wherein said menu is structured to have a different content in accordance with said identifier information (Column 2, lines 9-22, Column 7, lines 46-62, Column 8, lines 14-30),

wherein during said processing corresponding to said item information, said customer information database is used in accordance with said item information (Column 2, lines 9-22, Column 7, lines 46-62, Column 8, lines 14-30).

Koether does not explicitly teach the claimed limitation of activation of a button disposed on the appliance to send instruction.

However, Wood teaches the claimed limitation of activation of a button disposed on the appliance to send instruction (Column 10, lines 65-Column 11, lines 23).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Koether by adding activation of a button on the appliance to send instruction, which will ease user's interaction with the appliance. One would be motivated to do so to enhance the system's usability.

As to claim 14, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving system as set forth in claim 11, wherein said send instruction for said identifier information is issued by said appliance specified by said identifier information which is selected from an appliance list which is displayed by said displaying unit appliance (Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 7, lines 46-62, Fig. 6).

As to claim 15, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving system as set forth in claim 11, wherein said appliance and said displaying unit are structured integral with each other (Column 7, lines 44-62, Column 8, lines 57-64).

As to claim 16, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving system as set forth in claim 11, wherein said telecommunications unit sends information expressing the state of said appliance specified by said identifier information together with said identifier information to said server through said network (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 8, lines 14-30).

As to claim 17, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving system as set forth in claim 12, wherein if said item information received from said displaying unit is regarding an item to request repair work, when said appliance is to be collected and repaired, said server sends a menu of collecting methods to said displaying unit through said network and receives from said displaying unit information regarding a collecting method selected by said customer (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 6, lines 3-15, Column 7, lines 46-62).

As to claim 18, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving system as set forth in claim 12, wherein if said item information received from said displaying unit is regarding an item to request repair work, when said server determines that said appliance needs to be collected and repaired and said appliance is to be delivered to said provider via a third party, said server receives said identifier information regarding said

appliance from a third party terminal through said network and accordingly sends information regarding a delivery destination of said appliance to said third party terminal through said network, and said information regarding said delivery destination of said appliance is in accordance with said identifier information received from said third party terminal (Fig. 1, Column 5, lines 20-35, Column 6, lines 3-15, lines 34-46 Column 7, lines 46-62).

As to claim 19, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving system as set forth in claim 12, wherein when said identifier information received from said appliance is unregistered, said server sends information necessary for registration to said displaying unit from said server through said network (Fig. 6, Column 5, lines 20-35, lines 50-59).

As to claim 20, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving system as set forth in claim 12, wherein said menu of provider responses which is sent from said server to said displaying unit includes at least one of a telephone response request, a repair request, an operation method description request and another menu display request (Column 5, lines 50-29, Column 7, lines 45-62).

As to claim 21, Koether teaches the appliance information transmitting/receiving system as set forth in claim 11, wherein a plurality of said

appliances are disposed and connected to a LAN, and said telecommunications unit of any one of said appliances is connected to said network (Fig. 1, Column 4, lines 13-35).

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
- Akatsu et al. (U.S. Patent Number 6,496,862) discloses remote monitoring and control of devices.
 - Wookey (U.S. Patent Number 6,085,244) discloses dynamic test update in a remote computer monitoring system.
 - Kim et al. (U.S. Patent Number 6,473,788) discloses remote and maintenance and servicing of a network device.
 - Kavner (U.S. Patent Number 6,430,607) discloses system and method for performing remote request with on-line service network.
 - Ramberg et al. (U.S. Patent Number 6,857,013) discloses remote anomaly and diagnosis of a device.


- Carau, Sr. et al. (U.S. Patent Number 6,842,799) discloses appliance communication manager.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Faruk Hamza whose telephone number is 571-272-7969. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Saleh Najjar can be reached at 571-272-4006. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 886-217-9197 (toll -free).

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